

## **Lost For Over 300 Years**

### **The Jedi Holocron is a Legendary Wisdom Source, Lost for Over 300 Years**

With Princess Leia in his evil grasp, the Emperor can't resist showing off his most prized possession: the ancient artifact called The Jedi Holocron.

The Holocron, a glowing cube that sits comfortably in the palm of the hand, combines crystalline formations and hardware. Its metal parts are embossed with curious designs suggesting great antiquity. As the Emperor himself explains, Jedi teachings were recorded in its internals many centuries ago, using primitive hologram technology.

Leia recalls that Obi-Wan Kenobi once described the Holocron to Luke. Ben told Luke that the Holocron was a lost wisdom source containing some of the most secret Jedi history and teachings as revealed by long-departed Jedi Masters.

As Ben put it, "The teachings of the Holocron include thousand-year-old secrets -- but they also include the words and faces of men in the process of discovery. The Jedi Masters of old were not afraid to let their minds roam freely, for they were hungry for ever greater understanding of the mysterious Force which had become their power and their ally."

Ben said that if the Holocron could ever be found, it would help re-establish the Jedi Knights.

What Obi-Wan didn't know was that during the time of the extermination of the Jedi, the Emperor had discovered the Holocron among the belongings of a very old and very wise Jedi named Ashka Boda. Ashka Boda was murdered -- and the ancient object passed into the possession of the dark side.

This was unfortunate, because, to a certain extent, the knowledge hidden in the Holocron can be accessed by anyone. The Emperor learned considerable arcane information from the Holocron, and he exploited this knowledge, twisting it to his own ends. Some of his vaunted "dark side secrets" are in fact corruptions of teachings in the Holocron.

But the Holocron has many levels and many branching paths concealed within its circuitry. Only a Jedi Knight can unlock those hidden places. So it was that the greatest portion of the Holocron's wisdom remained sealed away from the Emperor's prying eyes.

### **In the Hands of a True Jedi, the Holocron Becomes an Interactive Wisdom Source**

"Through the Force things you will see: other places, other thoughts, the future, the past, old friends long gone." -- Master Yoda

On the most superficial level, the Jedi Holocron is, as Palpatine suggests, merely a recording device, an example of primitive hologram technology. It is a vast library in a small container -- a collection of "books" whose authors visit the reader and, speak to him directly.

But a pattern of organic crystals at the heart of the Holocron reacts to the presence of a true Jedi. These crystals are the key to the deeper levels of the Holocron's mysteries. As Leia makes contact with the chain of Teachers whose words and images are recorded in the Holocron, the first to appear is the Holocron "Gatekeeper" Bodo Baas. Without even being questioned by Leia, the shimmering image of Bodo Baas speaks of what most concerns her

"Jedi. Hear the words of Bodo Baas. Some among us have thought to conquer the dark side by learning its secrets... Three to my knowledge, three have tried this. Perished, every one of them perished."

The long departed Jedi's words have the ring of terrible prophecy -- for Luke Skywalker is at this very moment attempting to penetrate the power of the dark side. Leia now understands that Luke is not the first to believe the dark side can be conquered from within. Others have tried...and failed.

The stories of the other Jedi Knights who set out to learn the secrets of the Dark Side are contained in the Holocron. As the Millennium Falcon, safely away from Byss, journeys to the battle zone at Calamari, Leia retires in privacy to hold the Holocron in her hand...and ask Master Bodo Baas to tell her more.

Bodo Baas obliges his new student by relating the tale of Ulic Qel-Droma.

### **The Coming of the Krath**

Four thousand years ago, the Jedi were numerous and powerful throughout the galaxy. But it was also a time when thousands of Force-sensitive individuals (including many who had the potential to become Jedi Knights) were succumbing to the dark side's fascination.

In those days, there was a star system called The Empress Teta System, after the woman warlord who, in the early days of space travel, had conquered and united its seven worlds. As the millennia passed, the Teta System, which is situated in the Deep Galactic Core, had become the prime source of carbonite, a volatile metal that proved indispensable in the manufacture of faster-than-light engines (and secondarily, the suspended preservation of living flesh).

The 'descendants of Empress Teta were still the figurehead rulers of the seven mining worlds. But they had been forced to share their power, to a large degree, with the commercial interests that had developed the carbonite mines.

Together, the Teta royalty and the wealthy mine owners formed an elite society, a tightly knit group that reigned with arrogant abandon over multitudes of the less fortunate.

The sons and daughters of this elite were a self-indulgent lot, with much leisure time on their hands. As a way of amusing themselves, these young aristocrats began dabbling in the lore of primitive magic.

At some point in their mischievous experiments, the young Tetans crossed an invisible threshold and tapped into a strata of magic that unleashed its malign mental reality with unexpected power. What had started as a game suddenly grew serious, and took on a life of its own.

In the weeks following that fateful day, this sinister power utterly shattered the minds of the young Tetan elite, and began to transform them into its willing servants. Under the guidance of Satal Keto, the first of their group to fall, the young Tetans formed a secret society dedicated to the dark arts. They called themselves "The Krath," after an evil magician-god from the fairy tales they had learned as children.

In fact, their experience was far from the realm of fairy tales. The youthful sorcerers had been ensnared and swallowed up by the dark side of the Force.

#### **Ulic Qel-Droma, A Great Jedi of Four Thousand Years Ago**

Ulic Qel-Droma was a great Jedi warrior and Master of those days, pure of heart and purpose, without corruption of any kind. Some said he was arrogant, but those who knew him best said he merely possessed unbounded confidence, being very strong in the Ways of the Force.

By the time Ulic Qel-Droma heard of the Krath, they were well on their way to their dark destiny, having surreptitiously murdered their own parents and staged a political coup, taking control of the seven Tetan worlds.

This was a problem for the Jedi Knights, and it fell to Ulic Qel-Droma, as Watchman of the Teta system, to bring the Krath to justice.

But it quickly became obvious that any attempt at arresting the Krath would result in great bloodshed. The Krath possessed space-faring armies. Against every tenet of the Galactic constitution, they declared themselves ready to go to war against the Jedi.

A Jedi assembly was called, on Mount Meru in the desert world of Deneba, of the ten thousand Masters who had assumed primary responsibility for the Core systems.

Ulic Qel-Droma argued strongly that war was unnecessary and absolutely the wrong way to deal with the power of the Krath:

"We are witness to sinister developments... A war with the armies of the Krath might last for years. Many Jedi will die. And what will be gained by this bloodshed? We will have slain thousands, but the Krath themselves will survive, their dark powers intact.

"I suggest that the Krath coup is a dangerous development that demands special measures. This is the first time, to my knowledge, that the dark side of the Force has been used to take large-scale political power. This kind of episode must be stopped before it spreads, and it must be torn out by its very roots.

"The only way that will happen is if one of us joins the Krath, and learns the secrets of the Darkness that has possessed them and made them powerful."

#### **A Warning From Master Thon**

Many other Jedi warned Ulic against the foolhardy enterprise he had conceived. Master Thon of Ambria spoke very eloquently of the Jedi path:

"Ulic, my friend...the Dark Side has been with us since the beginning, and there is much accumulated understanding about its nature. But never forget -- there is the Way of a Jedi...and there is the path that leads to destruction. A Jedi who takes up the path of the dark side is no longer a Jedi. He who learns the Dark Way will become infected with Darkness. His judgment will become clouded and he will forget the good things he has learned. If he persists in this attempt to bridge the two divergent roads, he will be torn apart in his very being. Do not underestimate the power of the dark side...at all costs, do not underestimate the power of the dark side!"

But Ulic Qel-Droma was convinced he had discovered the best way to conquer the opponents of the Jedi. And as Watchman of the Teta system, he had the right (and the obligation) to proceed according to his own judgment.

So Ulic Qel-Droma disguised his identity, and merged with the social life of Cinnagar, the largest city in the seven worlds. ...Eventually, after many months, he found his way into the friendship and confidence of the ruling elite.

Ulic Qel-Droma became a Krath.

### **Warrior Magus and Master of the Dark Side**

What happened next is not completely known. According to the Jedi Holocron, Ulic Qel-Droma disappeared from view for a number of years. The other Jedi Masters tried to locate him, using all the mental powers at their disposal. But each time they attempted to penetrate the cloak of dark power that enveloped the sanctums of the Krath, they came up against "a wall of thought like blackest iron," and could advance no further.

Then, without warning, Ulic Qel-Droma reappeared -- as a high priest of the Krath. During the years of his disappearance he had been transformed completely, into a warrior magus with dark powers far beyond those demonstrated by any other member of the Krath!

His reappearance coincided with a political struggle among the Krath leadership. The Krath split into three groups, one dominated by Satal Keto, the founder. The second group was dominated by Satal's cousin Aleema, a woman whose dark side powers included the ability to create mass hallucinations. The third group was ruled by Ulic Qel-Droma.

Qel-Droma's organization was militaristic and bloodthirsty. He set out on a path of conquest, gathering treasure, armies, and weaponry. In short order he possessed a vast fleet of faster-than-light warships that could swoop down unexpectedly on worlds in distant parts of the galaxy...and quickly pillage their ruling cities.

Needless to say, Qel-Droma was declared an enemy of the Republic...and Qel-Droma declared himself an enemy of the Jedi! As the Jedi Knights took action to protect the worlds threatened by Qel-Droma's piracy, the Sorceress Aleema formed an alliance with Qel-Droma, using her wicked Dark Side talents against the Jedi with great effectiveness. The conflict that followed is remembered as an important historical turning point in the history of the Jedi Knights: it was the first war in which dark side powers were used on a massive scale, affecting the fate of millions.

### **Leia Fears the Unthinkable**

Leia did not have time to hear the rest of the story, and learn the final fate of Ulic Qel-Droma, because the *Millennium Falcon* had completed its journey to the Mon Calamari battleground...

But she did hear one last admonition from the Gatekeeper of the Holocron, Bodo Baas:

"A Jedi does not grasp at power.  
A Jedi is not a dominator, not an oppressor.  
To grasp for power is to abandon  
the Ways of the Force.  
Such a one ceases to know the Force, except in his Dark Side.  
To grasp at power is to take up the  
path that leads to destruction.  
The Dominator is the enemy, yes.  
But the Jedi do not use the dark powers of the dominator against him."

Hearing these words as the *Falcon* comes out of hyperspace, Leia is filled with fresh apprehension. For she knows that Luke, in his audacious quest, has done the unthinkable: he has used the powers of the dark side.

Suddenly Leia feels very alone and helpless. What if Luke is consumed by the dark side? What if he is transformed into a lord of war, like his Father before him? She is forced to contemplate a terrible possibility: Her brother may already be lost, like Ulic Qel-Droma... like Darth Vader. And she -- and her children -- may be the last of the Jedi.

Where will Leia, not yet a Jedi Master, find the strength to carry on, much less to conquer? How can she, a solitary Jedi Knight, prevent the final collapse of the Rebel Alliance -- and the entire galaxy -- into the sinister embrace of the dark side?

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